**Completion status of MCL (Vasundhara area) Orissa**

3207. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MCL (Vasundhara area) in Orissa a new mines project is nearing completion;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of Asia's biggest mines project in Kulta area in Orissa and the progress made so far in the matter; and

(d) the steps taken to complete it at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Vasundhara (East) Project of 0.60 mty capacity and sanctioned cost of Rs. 19.69 crores in the Vasundhara area of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), Orissa has been completed in March, 1998.

(c) and (d) Kulda Opencast Project is one of the mining projects to be taken up for implementation by MCL in the Vasundhara area. This project has been planned for a capacity of 10 mty and its estimated capital cost is about Rs. 948 crores (June, 1997 base price). An Advance Action Proposal (AAP) of Rs. 8.62 crores has been sanctioned by the Government in October, 1995 in respect of this Project. Development of infrastructural facilities like road, electric power supply etc. have been undertaken under the provisions of AAP sanctioned for early commencement of coal production after approval of the Project by the Government. Environmental Management Plan (EMP) is under process for approval in Ministry of Environment and Forests. After approval of EMP, the project proposal would be submitted by the Coal Company Ltd. (MCL) for approval of the Government.

**MCL's policy regarding coal extraction**

3208. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of the Mahanadi Coalfield Ltd. (MCL) with regard to extraction of coal;

(b) whether MCL is mainly extracting coal from the opencast mines;